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City of Boston's Workforce Increases by 297 in 1994

After six consecutive years of cutbacks, the City of Boston's total workforce increased by 297 positions or 1.5% in 1994, bringing the number of employees paid from all funds to 19,787 positions, as of January 1995. In the seven years since 1988, the City's total workforce has been cut by 1,792 positions or 8.3%. The City workforce is divided into city or internally-funded positions and grant or externally-funded positions. City-funded positions totaled 17,436, an increase of 68 or 0.4% over the last year and a decrease of 2,750 or 13.6% since 1988. Over the last year, the largest growth in city-funded positions occurred in the Boston School Department, which expanded by 216 positions or 3.2% and the greatest decrease was recorded in the Sheriff's Department which transferred 290 employees to a grant-funded payroll. External or grant-funded positions totaled 2,351 or 11.9% of the City of Boston's total workforce, an increase of 229 over the last year and an increase of 958 or 68.8% since January 1988.

Growth in the City's revenues should not automatically trigger increases in its payroll. Policy initiatives such as community policing and expanding community center hours and growth in student enrollment will require additional employees. However, efforts should be made by the Menino Administration to maintain a stable workforce level. Greater utilization of technology, reallocating funds from less-effective programs to new priorities, strict management of existing work rules and introducing competition can assist in delivering basic services more cost effectively. The Health and Hospitals Department should continue its program of personnel reductions to improve its competitive position. Clearly, this process will be facilitated through a change in the governance structure and the merger with University Hospital.

This report focuses primarily on city-funded positions. All personnel figures are in full-time equivalencies (FTE's) and are reported as of January 1 of each year.

City Departments

As of January 1995, city departmental employees, excluding hospital, school, and county workers, totaled 7,785, an increase of 144 or 1.9% over the last year and a decrease of 710 since January 1988. City departmental personnel accounted for 44.6% of all city-funded employees on Boston's payroll in January 1995. Increases in personnel levels occurred in 28 out of 51 departments, from January 1994 to January 1995. The largest growth occurred in the Departments of Police (+93), Community Centers (+38), Listing Board (+11), and Public Works (+10). These increases follow the priorities established in the Mayor's fiscal 1995 budget. During the last year, the Police Department added classes in June and November and expanded the cadet program. Two more Police classes are expected to be added before June 30, 1995. The Fire Department brought on one replacement class in the summer of 1994. The Fire Department is not expected to add further classes this year, waiting for the recommendations of the independent audit that is reviewing

CITY OF BOSTON PERSONNEL SUMMARY					
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITIONS					
JANUARY 1988, 1994, 1995					
INTERNAL FUNDS					
	1/88	1/94	1/95	1/88-1/95	1/94-1/95
CITY DEPARTMENTS	8,495	7,641	7,785	(710)	144
HEALTH & HOSPITALS	3,609	2,548	2,550	(1,059)	2
SHERIFF'S DEPT.	448	290	0	(448)	(290)
OTHER COUNTY	242	58	54	(188)	(4)
SUB-TOTAL	12,794	10,537	10,389	(2,405)	(148)
SCHOOLS [1]	7,392	6,831	7,047	(345)	216
TOTAL INTERNAL	20,186	17,368	17,436	(2,750)	68
EXTERNAL FUNDS					
CITY	463	436	413	(50)	(23)
SHERIFF'S DEPT.	14	777	1,090	1,076	313
SCHOOLS [1]	916	909	848	(68)	(61)
TOTAL EXTERNAL	1,393	2,122	2,351	958	229
GRAND TOTAL	21,579	19,490	19,787	(1,792)	297

[1] School figures may not tie out to previous Bureau reports due to revisions in expense codes, to provide more accurate employee data.

departmental operations. A reorganization of the Real Property Department into the Property Management Department and its restructuring of services with the Public Facilities Department resulted in a net decrease of 16 positions last year.

The greatest cuts within the 710 reduction since 1988, were in the departments of Public Works (-121), Fire (-97), Inspectional Services (-95), Library (-69), and Assessing (-62). Additionally, the Public Facilities Department and Property Management function transfer netted a reduction of 91 positions. However, during the same time, 15 out of 51 departments showed increases in personnel levels. The largest growth over the last seven years occurred in Community Centers (+66) and Listing Board (+18). The Police Department gained five positions over this period.

Health and Hospitals

The payroll of the Health and Hospitals Department totaled 2,550 positions as of January 1995, an increase of two from January 1994. The stability of the workforce occurred despite an increase in patient volume and the decision to stop utilizing contract nurses. While the period over the last year remained stable, individual categories within the Hospital Department have shown activity. During this time the Department has hired additional nurse managers (+18), service workers (+15), house staff (+9) and orderlies (+7). These increases have been offset by reductions in clerical (-28), license practical nurses (-17), management (-5), and professional middle management (-3).

The Hospital Department, which represents 14.6% of the city-funded personnel, accounts for 38.5% of the total employee reduction since January 1988. Over the last seven years, positions have been cut by 1,059 or 29.3%. A combination of factors contributed to the reduction of the hospital workforce. The financial feasibility of building a new Boston City Hospital was predicated on reducing operating expenditures, in good part, through personnel reductions to insure the funding of new debt service costs with operating revenues and to make BCH more competitive in this managed care environment. To further control costs, the Department closed Long Island Hospital in May 1991, which after transfers, resulted in a net reduction of 350 employees.

Boston Public Schools (BPS)

The fastest growing department in 1994 was the School Department, which increased its workforce to 7,047 as of January 1995, a jump of 216 positions or 3.2% over the prior year. The Department's employees represents 40.4% of the City's internally-funded total. Even so, the BPS's workforce is 345 less than it was in January 1988. In 1994, teachers accounted for the largest increase in the workforce, growing by 85 or 2.2%, of which regular education teachers (+31) represented the largest growth. Increases were also recorded in instructional support personnel (+80) and non-academic positions (+14). The number of central and school administrators increased by one employee in 1994.

Of the 345 positions cut since 1988, the total number of teachers declined by 10 or 0.3%. The largest teacher reductions occurred in regular education (-309) and vocational education (-28) teachers. Decreases were also recorded in non-academic positions (-287) and in the number of central and school administrators (-106). Reflecting enrollment trends, teacher increases occurred in special education (+109) and bilingual education (+97). Growth was also recorded in specialist teachers (+70) and itinerant teachers (+50), along with instructional support personnel (+105).

Suffolk County

Suffolk County, which is currently made up of the Sheriff's Department (Jail and House of Corrections) and the Registry of Deeds, accounted for 54 or 0.3% of Boston's city-funded payroll in January 1995. Between January 1988 and January 1995, city-funded county employees have been reduced by 92.2%. During this period, several events have affected county personnel levels. In November 1988, the State assumed responsibility for funding county courthouses, resulting in a transfer of 174 employees to state payrolls. In fiscal 1992, the Nashua Street Jail was opened, resulting in an increase in staffing levels. In fiscal 1994 and 1995, the remaining jail and corrections employees were transferred to a grant payroll funded by the State. An analysis of the combined city and grant-funded employees reveals an overall increase of 19 last year and an additional 440 or 62.5% since 1988.

CITY DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITIONS JANUARY 1988, 1994, 1995					
	1/88	1/94	1/95	1/88-1/95	1/94-1/95
ASSESSING	165	105	103	(62)	(2)
BUDGET MANAGEMENT	41	28	24	(17)	(4)
COMMUNITY CENTERS	211	239	277	66	38
FIRE	1,813	1,719	1,716	(97)	(3)
INSPECTIONAL SERVICES	272	190	177	(95)	(13)
LIBRARY	606	530	537	(69)	7
PARKS & RECREATION	260	219	218	(42)	(1)
POLICE	2,655	2,567	2,660	5	93
PROP. MANG. & PFD	437	362	346	(91)	(16)
PUBLIC WORKS	603	472	482	(121)	10
TRANS.-PARKING CLERK	55	64	58	3	(6)
TRANS.-TRAFFIC	389	368	344	(45)	(24)
TREASURY	69	57	56	(13)	(1)
OTHER DEPARTMENTS	919	721	787	(132)	66
	8,495	7,641	7,785	(710)	144